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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ADVICE OF PROGRAM CHANGE

PROGRAM: Global Human Rights and
Democracy

PROJECT TITLE: Venezuelan Democratic
Institutions

APPROPRIATION CATEGORY: Economic Support Fund (ESF)-
Human Rights and Democracy
Fund (HRDF)

LIFE OF PROJECT FUNDING: \$1,000,000

INTENDED FY 2001 FUNDING: \$1,000,000

Pursuant to section 634A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and section 515 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2001, (P.L. 106-429), this is to advise that the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) intends to provide \$1,000,000 in FY 2001 Economic Support Funds (ESF) from the Human Rights and Democracy Fund (HRDF) to support a democracy program in Venezuela.

**Strengthening Venezuelan Democratic Institutions
(\$1,000,000)**

Since coming to power, President Chavez has been weakening gradually many of Venezuela's democratic institutions. Recently, there have been signs of a more rapid and widespread movement away from democracy and toward increased authoritarianism. Without support Venezuela's marginal democratic institutions will continue to atrophy and will not be able to provide a base for a transition to a stronger democracy after President Chavez' term ends.

In an effort to respond to the changing conditions and challenges to democracy in Venezuela, DRL plans to provide up to \$1,000,000 in FY 2001 ESF/HRDF to protect and support the democratic processes and institutions in the country. The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) will use the funds to support initiatives implemented by sub-grantees related to freedom of expression and journalism, rule of

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2

law, civic education, political party building, labor organization, economic reform and business associations, and NGO development. These initiatives could include supporting the consolidation and operation of a national journalists' alert network; expanding a program designed to decentralize the justice system and support the election of local justices to more communities; supporting local efforts at party building; and increasing activities in the areas of coalition building, leadership training, and outreach to youth activists. DRL/PHD will administer this project.

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